

Florence Township Council Executive Session 3/11/20

FLORENCE TOWNSHIP COUNCIL EXECUTIVE SESSION

March 11, 2020

8:00PM

CALL TO ORDER & FLAG SALUTE

Council President Sandusky called the meeting to order and led the Salute to the Flag.

SUNSHINE STATEMENT

The Opening Statement was read by the Township Clerk: This meeting is being held in accordance with the provisions of the Open Public Meetings Act. Adequate notice was posted on the municipal bulletin board on January 15, 2020; published in the Burlington County Times on January 14, 2020; placed on the Township website, and given to the Trenton Times for information on January 12, 2020.

ROLL CALL

Present: Frank Baldorossi, Bruce Garganio, Paul Ostrander, Dave Woolston, Jerry Sandusky

Also present: Mayor Craig H. Wilkie, Richard A. Brook, Township Administrator; Thomas A. Sahol, Assistant Township Administrator; Kelly Grant, Esq., Township Attorney; James Biegen; Township Engineer; Stephen Fazekas, Future Township Administrator, Nancy L. Erlston, Township Clerk

PUBLIC COMMENT

Council President Sandusky opened the meeting to the public at this time. Seeing no one wishing to be heard, it was the Motion of Ostrander, seconded by Woolston to close the public comments. Roll call vote – all ayes.

BUSINESS

A. Administrator – Open Space Discussion

Administrator Brook explained that he and Solicitor Kelly Grant are still working together on the Open Space interpretive question and the explanation. It is not ready at the moment but will be ready in the very near future and it will be brought back for Council

B. Administrator – Front Street Property Transfer – Discussion

Administrator Brook said that this deals with the property on Front Street across from the Riverfront school. One of the homes was demolished and there is a second home there that the county has been working with the township on the possibility of a property transfer. We had the building inspected and the river bank was inspected by Maser Associates and both came back overall in good condition. The municipality was looking to use the one building to help fulfill and work towards its affordable housing obligation and the other property

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would remain vacant and open. If Council would be in agreement, the County would be advised that we would like to proceed with the transfer. There will be no cost associated with this, it is just a simple transfer property from one public entity to another.

Motion by Woolston, seconded by Garganio to approve the request of acquiring the property on Front Street. Voice vote – all ayes.

Upon roll call, Council voted as follows:

YEAS: Baldorossi, Garganio, Ostrander, Woolston, Sandusky

NOES: None

ABSENT: None

Unanimous vote – Motion carried.

C. Assistant Administrator – CDBG Project Recommendation

Assistant Administrator Sahol explained that the Community Development Block Grant is every two years and this year's award is \$75,000. He explained that we work toward a project that is as close to the award amount as possible. The area that he is recommending fits that criteria and connect the pathway systems that we are ultimately trying to develop that support the community coming back to this area of the township where the park recreation areas are and the future path down and around the railroad tracks. They have to be in eligible areas and this is an eligible area. The other eligible area is in Roebling where we did a majority of that work under the road program so we short-circuited the community development in doing so. If Council is in agreement, he wants to work toward the project in those areas, get the engineer to work on the design and get it out to bid so we can have the work done by September when the grant deadline requires it. It's a great project, handicap accessibility, sidewalks, walkability and livable spaces for people in that section of the community.

Council agreed and there will be a resolution in the future regarding the design.

Assistant Administrator Sahol also mentioned the railroad crossings and how we are still working to make the community more pedestrian friendly and trying to get rid of the railroad tracks and locations where we have crossings. The relationship we have with DOT Rail Division is very good and we are trying to keep it that way. The next two sections of rail that we are going to have removed for the benefit of our community is Railroad Avenue and Pine Street.

He mentioned that he will have a resolution ready next week authorizing us to go to GovDeals with auction items. There is some computer equipment, the old telephone system from the building, four trucks and a backhoe that are no longer needed for municipal purposes.

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Assistant Administrator Sahol stated that we now have installed a new telephone system where we now have a complete connection between the water and sewer department, the public works department and the administration building. The nice thing about it is we have full redundancy, so if there was ever a problem in any of the buildings all of the fallback can happen to another remote location which is great. It also allows for call coverage when there is short staffing so that we are always putting our public ahead of that issue. He thanked Council for authorization.

Mayor Wilkie mentioned that the Blue/Gold Dinner is going to be held on March 28th at 3:00 p.m. at the Community Center. And also, Matthew Williams will be having his Eagle Scout Court of Honor on Saturday, April 4, 2020 at 9:00 a.m. at the Fire House.

Mayor Wilkie stated that he has been paying attention to what is going on with the Coronavirus and monitoring and seeing what the appropriate reaction is. The common areas in the municipal building have been getting extra cleanings, especially after major events such as court.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Council President Sandusky opened the meeting to the public at this time.

Melanie Mieczkowski, 1000 West 4th Street, stated that she is an alternate commissioner on the Environmental Commission and wanted to bring up two items that were discussed last week. The first, she spoke about the proposed ban on the single use plastic carry-out bags. The Senate voted for a ban and it is now with the Assembly so they feel the need to get ahead of this in the town. She is asking Mayor and Council to bring this up with the local businesses to make the switch to cloth bags, etc. They have a few ideas to put out in the community with either sending a cloth bag home with the school children with some literature that way a good portion of the community will already have that to use. Or to have a contest where the children can create a poster and working with local businesses to maybe award them a gift certificate or something for the winning poster. Then the winning poster can be displayed in the stores to show the importance to reduce the use of these bags.

President Sandusky mentioned a few other things regarding the ban on plastic bags that were brought up at the meeting. For example, normally at the parades there is a lot of candy thrown out and the thought was maybe some of the businesses could get together in trying to maybe pass out one or two of these bags to individuals on the parade route. The hope is to get help from the township and some sponsors on the bag and hopefully reduce the use of plastic bags. They discussed the need to start early to get the information out.

The second item Ms. Mieczkowski spoke about is a grant that is available from ANJEC for open space stewardship projects. The deadline is April 6 this year so there may not be

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enough time to apply for this year, but they want to see if the township would want to work on any projects with them next year. One of the things they thought would be helpful for the community is signage and maps at the heritage trail. The grant is for up to \$1,500 so budgeting is something to think about.

Council Member Garganio asked whether or not we would be able to get someone to write something up by the April 6th deadline and at least submit. Assistant Administrator Sahol explained that he is not familiar with the organization ANJEC but if Ms. Mieczkowski could get him the information, he has a meeting with the county coming up and he can speak to someone and see if they can weigh in on the situation. Tom said if it works out, he can have a resolution authorizing it next week.

Seeing no one else wishing to be heard, it was the Motion of Ostrander, seconded by Garganio to close the public portion of the meeting. Voice Vote – all ayes.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion of Ostrander, seconded by Sandusky to adjourn at 8:18 PM. All ayes. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy L. Erlston, RMC
Township Clerk
/jns